

# CHINA BULLETIN

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## TIENTSUNG NEWS

Since the last Bulletin we have received almost a complete file of Tien Feng from May 1957 to May 1958. (Was it Ogden Nash who wrote: "You shake and shake the catsup bottle; and nothing comes - and then a lot'll.") I have looked through the nine 1958 numbers and will report on them in this number of the Bulletin; the earlier news will have to wait until the next bulletin.

The main news throughout these five months is the regional followup of the Peking Conference of last November. The Three Self Committees on the provincial and lower levels have called church workers together for extended study conferences, running for from three to six weeks, in which, under the active direction of government officials, two objectives have been sought: positively, to enlist every church worker for work on the socialist transformation of the country; and negatively, to search out and denounce every one whose thinking still retains any rightist tendency.

In fulfillment of the first objective, preachers are enlisted for voluntary labor in a nearby agricultural cooperative. They are called upon to promise the number of days they will contribute each year - the number reported varies somewhat from place to place, but seems to average about 50 per year. One news article tells of a large group of Shanghai pastors, headed by Episcopal Bishop Robin Chen, going out for a half day's work in the fields. This demonstration may have been only a token expression, but on the lower levels it is clear that church workers are expected to do heavy manual labor, such as digging and carrying soil in irrigation projects. Any who were not inclined to answer this "patriotic" call were softened up by a calculated campaign of ridicule and abuse, in which they were called parasites upon society and beggars, so that ultimately they all responded.

Another aspect of the socialization drive is to shorten up the time off expected by Christian members of the agricultural cooperatives. It is made to appear a very patriotic thing for a church voluntarily to declare a complete recess of church activities during all busy seasons (planting, reaping, etc.), and a reduction of Sunday observance at other times from a day to half a day, or even, as in some cases reported, to a weekly evening meeting, thus leaving all church members free to work in the fields every day.

The whole church has been subjected to a far-reaching rightist purge in the negative aspect of this campaign. We have already reported on the church leaders denounced at the Peking meeting, and in the Hunan and Hopei provincial meetings. (Incidentally I have not come up in any reference to a denunciation of Peking church leader Rev. P. H. Wang. That Singapore report may be a mistake.) In addition to those there are the following: Rev. Chou Hung-hsun

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in Mukden; Tsai Chih-ch'uang (Louis Tsai), YM Secretary in Nanchang, and the Revs. Wang Erh-pin (Episcopal, Kiukiang) and Yu Wan-chien (Hsuan-sheng-hui) at the Kiangsi meeting; Methodist leader James Chen (Jimmy Ding) at the Fukien meeting; Baptist minister Wallace Wang, YM Secretary Hua Chang-chi, Hsing-tao-hui pastor Liu Ching-peh, Liu Pen-yao, Chen Chih-ch'ien and Fan Kuo-ch'ing in the Szechuan meeting; Wang Ch'en-kuang in the Shansi meeting; Fang Ai-shih, Fang Kuang-yung, Hsu Szu-hsueh, Wang Chi-sheng, Tsou Chu-ai, Cheng Mien-yu and Wang Ta-chiang in the Chekiang meeting; Ho Ch'ao-jang in Kansu; Tuan Fu-hai in Harbin; Wu Chi-hsiao and Ma Tao-yuan in Yangchow; Chao Kuan-hai, Wu Chieh-pai (both CCC pastors), and Southern Baptist pastor Lin Sheng-ch'en in the Kuangtung meeting; Hsieh-t'ung-hui pastor Hu Huan-t'ang, Independent Church pastor Wen Shao-peh, and Sian YW Secretary Wan Tsun-i in the Shansi meeting; Ku Hwai-k'ung, Sang Shih-kuang and Lu Peing-chih in the Yunnan meeting; Ho Ch'ao-jang, Li Yoh-hang, Kou Hsi-t'ien, Tsui An-jen, Wei Yung-liang, Liu Ya-hang in the Kansu meeting; Kao Chien-kuo and Ch'en Ke-mi in Wenchow; Liu Shih-chen in Luta.

It will be noted that many of these denounced in the meetings from December to May have been outstanding leaders in the church. What has happened to them as a result of this denunciation is not clear. Some of the reports suggest that after repentance and confession they have been allowed to continue their work; other reports suggest dismissal from their work and assignment to menial tasks, or even imprisonment.

The charges against these rightists are practically all concerned with criticism of the Communist regime, and in many cases criticism ventured upon as a result of Mao Tse-tung's "hundred-flower" invitation. For example, Foochow Methodist Jimmy Ding is said to have charged that the Communists lacked humanity, and were cold toward religion. Another charge against the rightists, however, is worthy noting for its bearing upon the actions of ex-missionaries. One man is charged with not having broken off relations with the imperialists.

A number of those denounced had been prominent workers in the Three Self Movement, and some of them had been members of people's congresses, on the national, provincial or local levels. It is evident that previous acceptability is no protection against attack in the present campaign.

(I feel fairly certain that the objects of attack in every case are dictated by the government officials who have been very active in all these meetings.)

### THE JESUS FAMILY

Our readers will remember that this indigenous religious group, organized in Shantung by Chin Tien-ying, was dissolved in 1952 and reorganized as a more conventional church, without its original communistic life features. At that time the founder disappeared, and it was reported in the West that he had been put to death. It now appears, however, that he was sentenced to 20 years' imprisonment, and that he is now serving that sentence, engaged in the making of matchboxes. His nephew is also serving a prison sentence.

In 1953 the Three Self Movement published a book about the Jesus Family, entitled "The Record of a Revival." The book is by several authors, with the most crucial chapter written by CCC General Secretary Rev. H. H. Tsui. According to the charges in this book, Mr. Chin was a criminal of the first rank, adulterous, cruel and tyrannical.

We have not seen a copy of this book, but an English Methodist missionary who used to be in China and is now in Ceylon, Rev. B. Burgoyne Chapman, visited China in 1957, and made a special inquiry into this subject. With the help of Rev. Chao Fu-san, an Anglican priest on the faculty of Peking Theological Seminary, he got a translation of the above-named booklet, and wrote a summary of it in English which was approved by Rev. Chao. Later H. H. Tsui wrote to him saying, "All that was printed in the pamphlet which was kindly translated for you by the Rev. Chao Fu-san in Peking was absolutely true to fact. I personally heard with my own ears all those personal accusations against Chin Tien-ying at Machuang in the Family."

Mr. Chapman and Rev. David Paton, who is circulating Chapman's report, are both convinced that the Western world made a mistake in elevating Mr. Chin to a position of martyrdom.



since it is evident that Chinese Christian leaders today consider that he deserved the punishment which he has received.

(I must admit that I am still not convinced. The Communists have shown themselves perfectly unscrupulous in the manufacture of evidence against any one they are determined to punish, and thus far the church leaders have never shown enough independence to challenge such "evidence", even in cases where later developments have shown the charges to be false, as for example in the arrest of Lee Baen and of Kimber Den. And on the other hand, the unbiased evidence by persons who knew Chin Tien-ying as to his integrity and his Christian character is too strong to be dismissed out of hand.)

## CHINESE CHRISTIAN PAPERS

Rev. David M. Paton has mimeographed a series of five articles bearing on various aspects of the Chinese Christian Church today.

1. In 1955 M. A. C. Warren published a book "Caesar, the Beloved Enemy," in which he discusses the question of how God has been able to use the forces of imperialism to advance His cause. The Nanking Seminary Review of February 1957 published a review article on this book, attacking its main thesis. The article is written by R. L. Hsu, and translated into English in Nanking. He maintains that imperialism can never be the vehicle of revelation, but is always instead an obstacle to revelation.

2. Bulletin readers will remember that the German Professor W. Freytag visited China in February 1957, and while there lectured at the seminaries in Peking and Nanking. The two lectures in Nanking were recorded by one of the listeners, and these records, along with a trenchant criticism of them, were published in the Nanking Seminary Review for August 1957. Rev. A. F. Lutley has translated them into English.

From Prof. Freytag's International Review of Missions article, we know that he found a point of contact between the Church in Communist China and the German Church under Hitler. He did not make that comparison in his lectures in Nanking, but the critic, Shu Yu, was keen enough to recognize something of that attitude in his lectures, and condemns him sharply for trying to isolate the Chinese Christian from the great national movements going on in China. He points out that the West has not succeeded in solving the problem of the relation of church and state, and then says, "We in the Chinese Church in the new age and under a new social system have produced a new type of relationship. In an atmosphere of real freedom, it is not a question of whether the state controls the church or vice versa; it is a question of helping each other in different areas of life, and so fulfilling the will of God, and creating a just government. This is something that the Church in the West with its prejudices cannot understand."

He draws the conclusion that Freytag's theology "is merely the servant of his political policy," and then says, "To the 'warning' of western friends we should listen respectfully but discriminate wisely."

3. The third article is Chapman's report on the Jesus Family, which is reviewed in a separate article.

4. This is Bishop K. H. Ting's article on Christian Theism, which we have already published in the Bulletin (last December and January).

5. Imperialism - Exploiter of Religion. This is an important editorial translated from Tien Feng for March 3, 1958. The translation was prepared in China. The purpose of the editorial is to keep the Chinese Church on the alert against any renewal of relations with the West whereby imperialism might again use religion in its aggression against new China. It begins with some comparatively ancient history, but moves on quickly to modern times. Bishop Oxnam is quoted as saying to the Committee on Un-American Activities, "The churches have done and are doing far more to destroy the communist threat to faith and to freedom than all investigating committees put together." The writer comments, "Here is being presented before us a nauseating performance of the competition for favor from the finance-capital which is the real ruler of America. The mission boards are no less brazenly making claims before the big capitalists



for their merit in the anti-Soviet and anti-communist campaign, so as to show that they deserve the big capitalists' greater patronization and more sizable 'investments'."

"It is said that some missionaries do not consciously intend to serve imperialism. It is also said that some of them are 'quite good' in personal conduct, in preaching and in other activities. But these do not mean anything significant. We cannot make a true appraisal of an individual missionary by isolating him from the political essence of the entire 'missionary movement' and the missionary societies in the last century or two. The question to ask is: Does the missionary labor to help the people in their struggle against imperialism? Or, does not his labor rather go to confuse and split the people in that struggle? By asking the question in this way, we shall have uncovered what the actual political role of a missionary is and which side of the struggle his 'goodness' really serves."

The writer goes on to analyze the work of the World Council of Churches and finds that it is a capitalist tool in the cold war. The Study Division of the Council has received a large sum of money from Rockefeller to study "areas of rapid social change", namely the colonial and post-colonial countries, a study the results of which are to be put "at the service of imperialism for carrying on... activities injurious to the welfare of the people in these lands."

Again, the Division of Inter-Church Aid and Service to Refugees uses a great deal of money mostly from the USA, for the purpose of keeping refugees from going home, and of turning them into espionage agents against their own countries.

The public pronouncements of the World Council and its various organs show again that it is just a tool of the capitalist world. These pronouncements have upheld American imperialism in Korea, have encouraged war under the pretense of advocating peace, and always oppose the various colonial peoples' struggle for freedom and independence.

The writer cites the experiences in Hungary to show that imperialism makes use of the worldwide international ramifications of church world organization in order to undermine socialist states. He interprets the Hungarian incident as a counter-revolutionary plot engineered by outsiders with the help of the World Council of Churches.

This perversion of religion is characteristic of all western churches, he says; the fundamentalist churches are not, as some seem to think, an exception.

In regard to this China Bulletin, the writer has this to say, "In New York, the Division of Foreign Missions of the National Council of Churches, hypocritically using 'concern for Chinese Christians' as pretext, is publishing a bi-weekly with the purpose of supplying malicious rumors and distortions about New China and her churches."

The leaders of these organizations in the West are aware, he says, of these well-founded criticisms. "What has been their reaction? They do not dare to agree with us, but at the same time they do not dare to refute us either. They find our accusation well-founded, but at the same time pretend before their rank and file church members that nothing has happened. We should like to point out that this is a very dishonest attitude. The question whether imperialism has made use of the Christian religion is the most important question which the 20th century has raised before the Christians of the whole world. Some in the West do not like it and are trying to dodge it by talking about other matters. But the question has already been put and cannot be suppressed."

In conclusion he says, "To dissociate ourselves completely from imperialism does not imply the ending of all international contacts and relations on the part of us Christians. It is rather the pre-condition for the development of our international activities on a new and healthy path. We know that after all imperialists form a very small minority in the world. The large majority of Christians in all countries are not imperialists and we certainly do not boycott them. What we need is perpetual vigilance so as to render it impossible for imperialism to make use of Christian international relations and activities. We shall not permit imperialism, through its financial and other powers, to control or direct the life of our Church or in any way to interfere in it. As to opportunities for friendly interchange of thoughts and mutual edification in the tasks of the Church and of world peace among Christians of different countries, we certainly regard them as helpful to the strengthening of the witness of our Church, and therefore heartily welcome them."

Mr. Paton does not definitely offer these mimeographed papers for sale, but he does say that he still has a small number available, and that it has cost him five shillings per set to print them. His address is 149, South Croxted Road, London, S. E. 21.